

The Library Assistant :

The Official Journal of the Library Assistants' Association.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The next Meeting will be held at the National Library for the Blind, 18, Tufton Street, S.W., on **Wednesday, 13th November, at 7 p.m.**, when the Honorary Editor, Mr. H. A. Sharp, will open a discussion on "**After War Problems: the interests of the Public Library Assistant.**"

In view of the fact that the beginning of the end of the War seems to have appeared and that the possibility of peace approaches, it behoves us to consider what the effects will be upon the men who return to the libraries as well as upon ourselves. A fruitful topic for debate is here revealed, for everyone is bound to be affected, and the ventilation of ideas upon the subject cannot be without profit. It will be an advantage to the Meeting if all intending to be present will reflect upon the matter in the meantime: useful opinions will then be forthcoming in the discussion.

EDITORIAL.

Owing to unusual pressure on our space, reference to several important matters is unavoidably left over until next month.

THE IMMEDIATE PROGRAMME OF LIBRARIANSHIP.†

By W. C. BERWICK SAYERS, Honorary Fellow of the Association.

1. Six months after the outbreak of war I ventured upon a brief exercise in what George Eliot calls the most gratuitous form of stupidity*: I tried to forecast the effect of the progress of this struggle upon libraries and upon

* A Few Thoughts on Librarianship in Time of War.—*Lib. Assistant*, v. 14, p. 20, 1915.

† Address delivered at the Inaugural Meeting of the 24th Session, 16th October, 1918.

ourselves. It seemed then that in the wave of retrenchment sweeping over the land we were likely to be submerged deeply, and possibly overwhelmed. I argued, however, that if libraries proved their practical usefulness to the community they would survive, and might even increase in public esteem. Several parts of that forecast were faulty; but I am still unrepentant, and shall try a little more of the art of prophecy again here, but with restraints drawn from our knowledge of the fate that has overtaken prophets in this war.

2. Before we can study what ought to be the programme of our profession at this moment and in the immediate future, we must cast a brief glance at what lies immediately behind; see, if we can, where we have failed in the things which were set before us, and try to find the reason. Any attempt at a programme which ignores the common practical facts of the present is likely to be a vain beating of the air.

At the beginning of the war we realised that we were up against a big thing. Few of us, however, realised how big and how protracted the tragedy would be. Ten per cent. of our workers were then with the Colours, and that seemed a substantial number; now I doubt if there are five hundred qualified library workers left in all the libraries of the kingdom. I want to emphasise that, because it is not without its significance in what follows. We met, we read papers upon our ideals, we tried in a fumbling and furtive way to discover our relation to the whirl of circumstances surrounding us. It seemed that libraries might become information bureaux, and that they might assist in maintaining mental sanity. Not much more appeared probable or possible. These things, however, I submit that we have achieved to a large extent.

The immense craving for reading which has come to the surface during the war, but which must have been latent in the community before it, was not realised or even fully imagined by the profession. Therein lay the pathos of the situation. Our leaders lacked imagination, it seems, or, if they possessed imagination, they lacked the influence, or at least the courage, to translate their imaginings into effect.

Thus it happened that the principal authority on books and their distribution in the country, the Library Association, was practically quiescent while the newly-forming citizen armies were calling aloud for "something to read." Private enterprise taken in some half-dozen different centres did what should have been co-ordinated under the

direction and advice of the Library Association. The Camps Library, the Y.M.C.A., the Prisoners of War Library, and various other war libraries came into being without any reference whatever to the Library Association or to public libraries, except that the appeal made on behalf of the Camps Library was addressed at regular intervals through public libraries to public library readers. I am not criticising the work of any of these bodies when I say that they would have benefitted immensely if, like the American Library Association Camp Libraries, they had been co-ordinated and directed by a council of trained librarians.

That is one way in which the profession has failed signally during the war.

3. Then came the wave of reconstruction. Commencing with theories for reconstituting the material and physical life of the people, for producing new systems of housing, better employment, and, in fact, better social conditions generally, it leads up to what, in view of past history, was a completely revolutionary Education Act. A whole Ministry has been formed, and for two years past has been occupied with problems of reconstruction. It has some scores of committees dealing with the various phases of the communal life, and actually has one empowered to deal with adult education in England. This committee consists of educationists, representing the universities, the schools, and certain educational organisations.

Would you believe it? There is actually no librarian of any kind on that committee.

The implication of this is obvious: the university, the college, the school, all demand a place on any committee dealing with education, but not one of these institutions exercises one-tenth of the influence on adult education that libraries do. I need not weary you with the statistics of the issue of books in England; a hundred millions yearly would be a very conservative estimate of the issues from public libraries. Practically all these books have been chosen, focussed and distributed by librarians; they must give an immense amount of colour to the national life, more insidious, further reaching than can be given by any other agency.

Why has the profession been ignored?

4. These two examples may serve as typical of the things in which we have fallen short, and the answer to the questions I have posed is simple and concentrated. At the best of times the profession is small, circumscribed, and lacks influence. In many ways, too, I regret to say, it lacks

vision. There was plenty of good will and some amount of suggestion in 1914 and 1915, but the whole prospects of *doing* anything were met and counteracted by the lack of means. At its full strength the profession consists of about five thousand people; at present it consists of one-tenth of that number. The experience of all those who have brought suggestions and schemes to the Council table of the profession has been that if they themselves were not prepared to carry out what they proposed, there was no one else willing or able to do it. One can see what this means immediately. Things are discussed, relegated to committees, the committees meet once or twice, and then the whole matter is forgotten. Had we in the profession a Genius,

Like some far star that comes in sight
Once in a century,

even these difficulties might have been overcome. As it is, nine-tenths of the librarians who remain have been more or less overwhelmed by their immediate difficulties. They have had to conduct the ordinary business of their libraries, to train temporary staffs when they could obtain them, to engage in all manner of war work, such as food controlling, recruiting, volunteering, and special constabulary; and seeing that the average day consists of only twenty-four hours, the leisure for the promotion of that progress, which we think to be so necessary at present, has been practically out of the question. Let us admit all these things, because they do explain the position and answer many criticisms upon it.

I need not add that the explanation does not satisfy me sufficiently; nor will it satisfy any member of the audience which I address.

5. I do not mean to imply that no progress has been made at all. The contrary is the case. We have seen a growth in the reading of books which argues that the future is with us; we have seen the establishment in the greater towns of commercial departments intended to bring the library to a part of the community that it has not touched in a practical way before; we have seen a renewed interest in technical libraries; and in the provision of literature for children—a provision which I believe to be fundamental to the whole of our work. Taken together, however, these do not form a complete programme of librarianship. The commercial library is a sectional matter at its very best; it influences, but is not directly for, the average community. The same may be said of the other new departures I have mentioned. Even the children's library pursued very closely under present conditions is an unsatisfactory thing, because

such a pursuit can only be made at the expense of the adult library, and therefore to the detriment of the whole library work as we know it. If the library is in any way to take the place which it requires and deserves, it must be a *general* civic institution, catering for everybody from the child to the adult, through every stage of culture, and by every means of legitimate literary appeal. In very few towns, if anywhere in this country, has this been possible.

The cause of this effect is the hoary one of lack of funds.

6. Every difficulty with which we were faced in 1914 is accentuated in 1918, and will be still more accentuated as the years go on. If the stay-at-home reading community is so great at present, what will be the extent of the reading community when the millions of our absent men return? We may be "snowed under" by demands upon our resources which we have totally inadequate means of meeting. Indeed, I may say in parenthesis that if 30 per cent. of the average community borrowed books from an average public library, that public library would be overwhelmed. All these difficulties have been increased of late, as I have said. The cost of living, of materials, of accommodation has risen beyond all precedent; only the library rate marks time.

But even admitting all these things the case is not hopeless.

7. In what I have said so far the crucial point has been my reference to the Committee on Adult Education, established by the Ministry of Reconstruction. Mr. Arthur Greenwood, who is one of the secretaries of that Committee, tells me that at present it is engaged upon an enquiry into the purposes and needs of public libraries, and in reply to my protest that there is no librarian on the Committee, he tells me that the Committee is in close conference with the President and other members of the Council of the Library Association. It is obvious that when it examines into the question it must see the impossibilities of our position, and out of that I firmly believe will grow increased financial means. But it is not to the advantage of the libraries that the library profession should not have had a directly guiding voice in the proposals which the Committee is likely to make. The main danger of the position was pointed out at the Library Association Conference last year. The libraries may be taken out of the hands of their present Authorities and placed under the Education Authorities. That, if it came about, would be a tragedy of the first order. It would result possibly in an immediate financial advantage to the

overburdened and underpaid library workers of the country ; but it might mean, further, that libraries, which at present are most catholic civic institutions, would be subordinated to pre-conceived schemes of teaching and education. It would mean a great deal more, but I daresay you are all familiar with the arguments on both sides of the question and I need not labour them. The attitude of the public man towards the question is a simple one : he doesn't care, he will tell you, how the book reaches the reader so long as it does reach the reader ; " he takes no stock " of librarianship. He forgets that a book is much more likely to reach its right reader if it is directed towards him by a trained librarian, than it is through any other channel. Harking back to the control of libraries by Education Authorities, we have had examples of its results lately. We find the ineffable county councils who are organising rural libraries under the scheme of the Carnegie Trustees, appointing teachers, theatrical impressarios, and other people, who have no practical acquaintance with our work, to direct them, and the value they place upon the services of the librarian may be measured by the fact that the average salary offered for such positions is £160 a year, or rather less than a good bricklayer is earning at the present moment. To remedy these things our immediate programme must be to obtain wider public influence and stronger personal qualifications. Primarily this is the work of the Library Association.

I do not wish to labour the part that the Library Association should play in this or any matter. As at present constituted the Library Association is conservative and somewhat inert, and it is difficult to see how it can be otherwise unless something occurs in the nature of a revolution. I want to impress upon ourselves that where there is work to be done we should try in every case to do it ourselves, and not to lean upon another body. We have carried many resolutions in the past requesting the Library Association to do this, that, and the other. The Library Association is sympathetic and willing enough when it is in the right mood, but it has very few more means than we have of securing the objects at which we aim. At the same time the obtaining of recruits for our cause from the general public must be made through the Library Association ; and it seems to me that the first step is to engage the practical interest of the men who are conducting the collateral agencies in the country. I fail to see why such men as Mr. Herbert Fisher, Mr. John Lewis, Mr. Greenwood, Mr. Mansbridge, Mr. MacTavish, the President of the National Union of

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Library Association.

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Section 3.—Classification.

Section 4.—Cataloguing.

Section 5.—Library History and Organization.

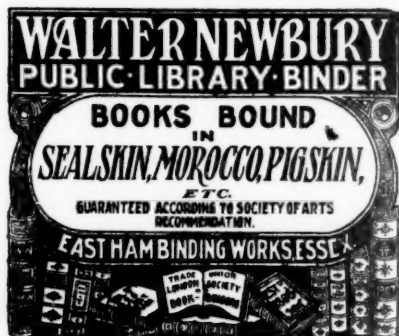
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Hon. Secretary, Library Assistants' Association, Bromley Public Library, Poplar, E. 14.

LIBRARY ASSISTANTS' ASSOCIATION

THE

November Meeting

WILL BE HELD AT THE

NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND

(18, Tufton Street, S.W.),

ON

WEDNESDAY, 13th NOVEMBER,

At 7 p.m.

The HONORARY EDITOR

(Mr. H. A. SHARP)

Will Open a Discussion, on

**After War Problems :
the interests of the
Public Library Assistant.**

As this is a topic of supreme importance to every Library Assistant, the Council hopes that there will be an unusually good attendance.

LIBRARY VACANCIES AND APPOINTMENTS.

The Council of the Library Assistants' Association has made arrangements for receiving applications from librarians needing assistants, and also for registering names of assistants seeking new positions. The latter should send a full statement of their age, experience and qualifications, together with an indication of the salary and position (London or Provincial) required. Librarians should state their requirements, as well as the salary offered.

No responsibility in any respect is accepted by the Council or its Officers, the arrangements merely being intended to facilitate the filling of vacancies and as a convenience to Members, to whom any advantages that may accrue are at present limited.

All communications to be addressed to the Honorary Secretary, Bromley Public Library, Brunswick Road, Poplar, E.14.

Teachers, the Vice-Chancellor of every university, and similar men are not part and parcel of the Library Association. The distribution of books purchased and circulated with public funds, although it may not be so important a matter as the national system of drainage, is yet of immense importance, and cannot be neglected by any type of man who claims to have a directing voice in the intellectual life of our people. We have failed to interest even the member of the local library committee, and we actually find libraries represented in the Library Association as institution members not by the Chairman of the Libraries Committee, but by the Librarian. Until this sort of thing is altered we shall not make the progress we desire to make; for no library legislation can be accomplished from inside the profession unless we can obtain a backing of public opinion such as can only be made for us by the type of person whom I have named.

8. I will leave this question now and look at the position as it faces the young library worker. For years we have longed for increased resources, and whatever may be said to the contrary, there seems now some faint possibility of our receiving them. The suggestion of an extra penny rate does not have the same appalling effect upon the mind of the municipal councillor that it had four years ago. With increased resources there must necessarily come increased development, and the increased demand for higher qualifications to carry out that development. The municipalities will have means to pay larger salaries; larger salaries mean greater competition: and those of you who were at the Aberystwyth Summer School last year will remember that Sir William Osler emphasised the intrinsic attractions of the profession for the college student. So that, given the possibility of a good livelihood from it, these men will probably try to enter libraries. There is no reason why they should not, providing that in addition to the somewhat circumscribed culture implied in an ordinary pass degree, they bring us a proper technical equipment. Negotiations are taking place between the Library Association and University College with reference to the possible establishment of a Library School. I do not think I violate any confidence in saying this; and I want to say it because it is a serious matter for every member of this audience. If such a school comes into being under such auspices, it will eventually mean the establishment of a library degree. Now a degree implies that its holder has matriculated and passed through some part of an arts course at a University. Such

a degree would entirely supersede the diploma of the Library Association in a very few years. Such a library school would be a day school involving probably the whole of the student's time; or it may be a part time school which library assistants might attend by some adjustment of their hours of work. What I want to get at is that it is no use for newly-appointed assistants to take the technical examinations of the Library Association unless they have pursued such a course as the Matriculation Course. Whatever may be their qualifications from another body they will be discounted in the eyes of the public if they have not the university stamp upon them—that is to say, when a university stamp is available. I think this matter needs very careful consideration and discussion by this Association.

9. I said that the war had intensified the financial difficulties of libraries, and the most directly personal issue here is the salaries question. Hitherto the salaries of library workers have been based upon the demand for their services and the supply of persons offering such services. The large number of people whom the public thought adequate to run the libraries and the fewness of the openings, combined with the historic neglect of things intellectual, which is our national characteristic, brought the wages down to the lowest level in the professional scale. For the immediate moment, however, these salaries have in many cases been adjusted in an upward direction (I am speaking of public libraries) not by the will of library committees, but by library authorities acting under the pressure brought upon them by municipal workers generally. I think you will see what this pressure implies. Hitherto only the highest professions, such as law and medicine, have had trade unions in common with the manual workers of the country. We have strenuously fought against any suggestion that library associations should become trades unions, or even part of trades unions, but there is accumulating evidence that against our will some affiliation of the kind may occur. The National Association of Local Government Officers, to which many of us belong, seems to be working to become a trades union. The advantages of being supported in our offices and in our payment by the whole of British workers are pretty clear; the disadvantages must be discussed and weighed against them. I do not express an opinion either way, beyond pointing out a tendency which seems to me to be almost inevitable and beyond our control.

I have given you a most sketchy and ineffective address, but from it I hope you will gain no pessimistic view

of our profession and its possibilities. Of one thing I am confident, that the future of the library idea and the library is assured, and it will be expanded if we enlarge the programme of libraries, interest non-librarians and public men, co-ordinate our work throughout the country, educate ourselves, and combine economically along wisely considered lines.

L.A.A. ROLL OF HONOUR (continued).

KILLED IN ACTION.

***Eric Bishop.**—Our readers in general, and members of Easter Schools in particular, will be grieved to hear of the death in action of Mr. Eric Bishop, sub-librarian of Enfield. He was struck by a shell on 17th July, and died before reaching the casualty station. Mr. Bishop received his early training at Woolwich under Dr. E. A. Baker, and went to Enfield in 1908, where he assisted in the organisation of the two Carnegie Branch Libraries opened in 1910, and the new Central Library in 1912. Before going to France he married Miss A. V. Denton, formerly of the Islington Public Libraries, to whom a daughter was born on 17th September. We offer to Mrs. Bishop the expression of our sincere and deep sympathy in her sad bereavement, assuring her that we shall always remember her husband as a man of sterling worth, unassuming, but keenly interested in his profession and in the Association.

Pte. H. V. J. Davis.—We offer our respectful sympathy to Mr. Cecil T. Davis, the veteran librarian of Wandsworth, whose youngest son fell in action last August. This is the second son that Mr. Davis has lost in the war.

WOUNDED.

***Second Lieut. M. Jackson Wrigley** (5th West Yorkshire Regt.), sub-librarian of Stockport, and late Honorary Treasurer of the North-Western Branch of the L.A.A., has been severely wounded, but we are pleased to learn that he is making good progress towards recovery. Lieut. Wrigley has been wounded on two previous occasions.

DECORATED.

***Sapper Frank T. Bussey**, an assistant at the Norwich Public Library, has been awarded the Military Medal.

Lieut. Richard Wright, M.C. (R.G.A.), of the Croydon Public Libraries. The following quotation from the *London Gazette* explains how Lieut. Wright gained his decoration, which was recently announced in our columns: "Whilst in command of the forward section of his battery all day under intense high explosive and gas bombardment, he fought his guns till the enemy were within 400 yards. He then rescued the breach blocks from them, and organised a rifle party to assist the infantry."

* Member, L.A.A.

PROCEEDINGS.

By kind permission of the Committee, the Inaugural Meeting of the Twenty-Fourth Session was held at the Central Library for Students, on Wednesday, 16th October, at 3 p.m., the President, Miss Ethel Gerard, being in the chair.

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed, Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers delivered an address on "The Immediate Programme of Librarianship," as printed in this issue. The address was listened to with rapt attention, and many of those present took part in the ensuing discussion.

The interest of the meeting was further enhanced by the presence of Staff Sergeant G. R. Bolton (R.A.M.C.), who had just arrived from France. Sgt. Bolton expressed his approval of the way in which the Association had endeavoured to carry on under extreme difficulties, and spoke appreciatively of the facilities that had been extended to him in France for inspecting such libraries as he came across from time to time. In particular, he expressed his indebtedness to the authorities of the Bibliothèque National, and of the Reference Library at Havre. He was also warm in his praise of the excellent work of the Y.M.C.A. in providing good reading material for the men on active service. A vote of thanks to Mr. Sayers for his helpful address was moved by the Vice-President (Mr. R. F. Bullen), and seconded by Miss Day. Refreshments were very kindly served by the librarian and staff of the Central Library, to whom the President tendered the best thanks of the meeting, as well as to the Committee for permission to meet.

NORTH-WESTERN BRANCH.

The Committee of the North-Western Branch offer Prizes to the value of Ten Shillings, Five Shillings, and Two Shillings and Sixpence for the best essays on "Suggestions for a more progressive policy of the Library Assistants' Association and how it can be made more attractive to Library Assistants."

Essays not to exceed 500 words. Competitors must be Members of the North-Western Branch. Essays to be sent to the Acting Honorary Secretary (Mr. Reginald G. Williams), Central Library, Bolton, not later than 31st December, 1918.

FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT.

The Committee have pleasure in presenting their Fourth Annual Report, showing the work of the Branch for the year ended September 30th, 1918. The total membership of the Branch is 67, comprising 6 Fellows, 30 Members, 31 Associates, being an increase of 5 on the last year. Following our last Annual Meeting at Darwen, successful and interesting meetings have been held at the following places:—

March 20th, 1918, Mayor's Dining Room, Town Hall, Bolton Joint Meeting of the North-Western Branch and the Manchester Library Assistants. Presidential Address (Mr. Archibald Sparke, F.R.S.L., F.L.A.). Paper: "National Reconstruction and the Libraries," Mr. L. Stanley Jast, Manchester.

July 10th, 1918, Public Library, Accrington. Paper: "Talks and Readings to Children," by Miss Mizpah Gilbert, Liverpool Lyceum.

October 16th, 1918, Public Library, Bolton, Annual Meeting. Debate: "Questions affecting the future of Librarianship."

Despite the fact that 34 of our members are serving with the Colours, the Branch's finances are good. The income for the Session was £5 17s. 6d.

From this, £3 12s. 6d. was paid to our parent body; other expenses amounted to £1 2s. 8d., leaving a balance in hand of £1 2s. 4d. This, with a balance already in hand of £2 9s. 2d., gives a total amount in hand of £3 11s. 6d.

Members will be pleased to know that our President (Mr. Archibald Sparke, F.R.S.L., F.L.A., Chief Librarian of the Bolton Public Libraries, has been elected an Honorary Fellow of the Library Assistants' Association. The Election is the result of the following Resolution adopted at the July Meeting of our Branch.

Resolved:—That it be recommended to the Council of the Library Assistants' Association to recognise the services of Mr. Archibald Sparke, F.R.S.L., F.L.A. (Chief Librarian, Bolton Public Libraries) by electing him an Honorary Fellow of the Library Assistants' Association; the encouragement he has always given and shown in the education and welfare of library assistants, especially in granting facilities to attend classes held in librarianship at the Manchester School of Technology; in the coaching of assistants for the Professional Examination of the Library Association, and the great interest he has always shown in our Branch, makes him, in our opinion, worthy of the honour we ask you to give him.

This resolution was unanimously endorsed at the last Council Meeting of the Association, and we feel certain that our members will agree that Mr. Sparke has thoroughly earned the honour thus conferred upon him, and at the same time we appreciate the honour Mr. Sparke has brought to our Branch by being the first Honorary Fellow to be elected from a branch.

The following officers were elected for 1918-19:—

President: Archibald Sparke, Esq., F.R.S.L., F.L.A., Public Libraries, Bolton.

Vice-Presidents: Richard Ashton, Esq., Public Libraries, Blackburn.
Ben. H. Mullen, Esq., Public Libraries, Salford.
C. W. Madeley, Esq., Public Libraries, Warrington.
Joseph Pomfret, Esq., Public Libraries, Darwen.

Chairman: John D. Gifford, Public Library, Bolton.

Hon. Treasurer: *M. Jackson Wrigley, Public Library, Stockport.

Hon. Secretary: *James Ross, Public Library, Liverpool.

Acting Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary: Reginald G. Williams.

Committee: *Mr. T. A. Barnett, Manchester University Library, Manchester.

Miss E. A. Bamber, Public Library, Accrington.

Miss L. Cross, Public Library, Manchester.

*Mr. Harry Fostall, Public Library, Manchester.

*Mr. W. G. Fry, Public Library, Manchester.

Mr. Frank Helliwell, Public Library, Preston.

Miss Emily Hogarth, Public Library, Bolton.

Miss Maud Quinn, Public Library, Bolton.

Mr. R. G. Williams, Public Library, Bolton.

Mr. T. L. Yates, Public Library, Bolton.

Auditor: Mr. James Cranshaw, Public Library, Bolton.

* On Active Service.

The best thanks of the Committee are due to the following for hospitality: Archibald Sparke, Esq., F.R.S.L., F.L.A., Bolton; J. W. Singleton, Esq., F.L.A., Accrington; Mr. Councillor Veevers, Chairman, Public Libraries Committee, Accrington.

The Committee are pleased to hear of Mr. J. W. Merrishaw's success, and heartily congratulate him upon his appointment as Librarian of Newark, and regret that it necessitates his resignation from the Branch.

The Committee ask all Members of the Branch to make a special effort this coming Session. We should like to have a record membership when our colleagues come back from the battle fields, and we feel certain that with a little influence many assistants would join our ranks. We desire all Library Assistants in Lancashire and Cheshire to be Members, for unity is strength.

On behalf of the Committee,

Signed, ARCHIBALD SPARKE, President.

Signed, FRANK HELLIWELL, Chairman.

Signed, REGINALD G. WILLIAMS, Hon. Treasurer and Secretary.
30th September, 1918.

Statement of Receipts and Expenditure, 1917-18.

Receipts.			Expenditure.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Balance 1916-17 ...	...	2 9 2	Proportion of subs. paid to		
Subscriptions:			Hon. Treas., L.A.A. ...	3 12 6	
3 Fellows ...	...	1 2 6	Hon. Sec. & Treas. Expenses:		
10 Members ...	...	2 10 0	Postage ...	...	17 9
18 Associates ...	...	2 5 0	Stationery ...	...	4 11
			To Balance ...	...	3 11 6
	£8	6 8		£8	6 8

Signed, REGINALD G. WILLIAMS, Acting Hon. Secretary & Treasurer.

Audited and found correct,

September 30th, 1918.

Signed, T. L. YATES, Auditor.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Mesopotamia,

18th August, 1918.

To the Editor of "The Library Assistant."

SIR,—You would hardly think Mesopotamia could teach the folks at home anything in Library practice, but I have met something that was an innovation to me at all events.

In one of the "voluntary organisation" libraries in Baghdad there is a department other than the general issue department, where duplicates and "buckshees" of all sorts are kept. Any user of the Library having books of his own may deposit them in this section, and take away an equal number of such other books as he may find there.

There appear to be some possibilities in the application of this idea to municipal libraries, most of which have a stock of surplus books, generally unwanted gifts: these could be turned to some account and yield a few (a very few, I am afraid) books that might be useful by this method of exchange.

I wonder what L.A. readers think of the idea. Would any care to make an experiment on these lines?

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

W. HYNES

(Hove Public Library).

CHANGES AND APPOINTMENTS.

HILDA KELLEY, of the Bolton Public Libraries, has been appointed a senior assistant in the Warrington Public Library.

ETHEL MAIDES, of the Croydon Public Libraries, has been promoted to the rank of a temporary senior assistant.